

1. **preparedness** (noun) – forethought, forward planning, watchfulness/attentiveness.
2. **trail** (noun) – series, sequence, chain/line.
3. **toll** (noun) – suffering, loss, damage.
4. **storm** (noun) – hurricane, tornado, cyclone.
5. **batter** (verb) – damage, impair, mar/spoil.
6. **mortality** (noun) – (in a particular time/for a cause) the rate of death.
7. **in spite of** (phrase) – despite, notwithstanding, regardless of.
8. **resilience** (noun) – strength, toughness; the capacity to recover quickly from difficulties.
9. **vulnerability** (noun) – weakness, frailty, susceptibility.
10. **influence** (verb) – affect, have an effect on, change/modify.
11. **press** (verb) – urge/call/ask, put pressure on, pressurize.
12. **framework** (noun) – structure, scheme/system, organisation.
13. **mitigation** (noun) – alleviation, reduction; lessening.
14. **paramount** (adjective) – most important; supreme, of prime importance.
15. **outbreak** (noun) – outburst, epidemic, sudden appearance/occurrence.
16. **in the midst of** (phrase) – in the middle of.
17. **contain** (verb) – restrain, control, limit.
18. **look ahead** (phrase verb) – to think about what will happen in the future.
19. **periodic** (adjective) – regular, repeated, recurrent/cyclic.
20. **drill** (noun) – training, instruction; procedure/practice.
21. **hold the key** (phrase) – to have control.
22. **commendable** (adjective) – admirable, praiseworthy, laudable.
23. **coincide** (verb) – coexist, concur, correspond.
24. **devastation** (noun) – destruction, damage, havoc/wreckage.
25. **keenly** (adverb) – eagerly, tensely, enthusiastically.
26. **convene** (verb) – meet, assemble, gather together.

## Surviving Fani: on Odisha government's preparedness

### The Odisha government has shown by example how to manage a natural disaster

Cyclone Fani has left a **trail of destruction across a large part of coastal Odisha**, but its management has emerged as a global example of how timely weather alerts, preparedness and informed public participation can dramatically reduce loss of life. The toll from the extremely severe cyclonic storm on May 3 stood, at last count, at 34 deaths. In terms of material losses, several districts were battered, houses flattened and electricity and telecommunications infrastructure destroyed, but the relatively low mortality shows a dramatic transformation from the loss of over 10,000 lives in 1999 when super cyclone 05B struck. Odisha then worked to upgrade its preparedness, which was tested when very

severe cyclonic storm Phailin struck in 2013. It was able to bring down the number of deaths to 44 then, in spite of a wide arc of destruction: 13 million people were hit and half a million houses destroyed. The Odisha government and the Centre now have the task of rebuilding infrastructure. They should use the opportunity to upgrade technology, achieve cost efficiencies and build resilience to extreme weather, all of which can minimise future losses. Given the vulnerability of Odisha and Andhra Pradesh to cyclones, the frequency and intensity of which may be influenced by a changing climate, the Centre should press for global environmental funding under the UN framework to help in the rebuilding. Both States have received funding from the World Bank in cyclone risk mitigation efforts since 2011.

The priority in Odisha is to restore electricity and telecommunications, which will require massive manpower. This should be treated as a national mission. Public health interventions are paramount to avoid disease outbreaks. The State government has been able to restore some physical movement by opening up highways and district roads; the Centre has relieved tension among students by postponing the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test in Odisha. Overall, there is a sense of relief that in the midst of a national election the toll was effectively contained. Looking ahead, India must prepare for many more intense and frequent **cyclones** along the coastal States. Preparedness has to focus on building resilience and strengthening adaptation. This can be achieved through better-designed houses and cyclone shelters, good early warning systems, periodic drills and financial risk reduction through insurance. Early weather warnings hold the key to better management, and during the Fani episode the India Meteorological Department played a crucial role. Its commendable performance has been recognised by the UN as well. Odisha's experience, which coincides with similar devastation along east Africa this year, will be keenly followed at the UN Disaster Risk Reduction conference convening on May 13 in Geneva.